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**FLORIDA TAXWATCH PROPOSAL  
TO ASSIST LEON COUNTY  
WITH A  
PROPOSED "PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS" PROGRAM**

**February 3, 2004**

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*"Celebrating 25 years of improving taxpayer value, citizen understanding and government accountability"*

## FLORIDA TAXWATCH PROPOSAL TO ASSIST A PROPOSED LEON COUNTY PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS PROGRAM

### Overview

The need to enhance citizen engagement, understanding and confidence in government frequently is cited in academic research and public opinion surveys, and publicized by the media.

Leon County government is responding to this need, in part, by considering development of a prominent, independent productivity awards program to encourage, recognize and reward County employees, teams and work units for truly outstanding performance, innovation and creativity that empirically improves taxpayer service delivery.

Florida TaxWatch is uniquely qualified and strategically positioned to help enhance citizen engagement and confidence in Leon County government. For approximately a quarter century, TaxWatch has worked throughout the state to improve taxpayer value, citizen understanding and government accountability. Key to TaxWatch's mission is documenting and informing the public of what is good and noteworthy about government.

Florida TaxWatch is widely recognized as a watchdog of citizens' hard-earned tax dollars and a promoter of constructive taxpayer improvements. A recent poll of the nation's statewide taxpayer research centers published by City and State magazine (since purchased by Governing magazine) cited Florida TaxWatch as one of the six most influential and respected government watchdogs and taxpayer research institutes in the nation.

For 16 years, Florida TaxWatch has partnered with The Florida Council of 100 and the State of Florida as sponsors of the Davis Productivity Awards for state employees. More than 9,000 Davis Awards winners have produced approximately \$4.5 billion worth of added value consisting of cost savings, cost avoidances and additional revenue collected under Florida law. Since 2000, TaxWatch has worked with the City of Tallahassee to develop and implement a productivity awards program patterned after the Davis Productivity Awards.

### Examples of Assistance

Florida TaxWatch will assist Leon County with the proposed Leon County Productivity Awards program as follows:

- Development of program standards, criteria and operating procedures;

- Development of a forms/data management system to streamline nominations submission, staff evaluation, judges' review and decision making, media material and preparation for the awards ceremony;
- Suggested nomination form, instructions, questions and format;
- Guidance for nominators on completion and submission of nomination forms;
- Evaluation of nominations using awards criteria;
- Orientation and assistance to judges, including preparation of nominations review notebooks;
- Providing advice and counsel on fundraising and in the planning and preparation of the awards ceremony; and
- Providing first-year program evaluation and improvement recommendations.

### **Expected Outcomes**

Florida TaxWatch's key expectation from assisting the proposed Leon County Productivity Awards program is to enhance public awareness and appreciation of the positive contributions of award winning employees, teams and work units to the community -- reflecting quality management and the leadership of elected officials. This can be achieved by empirically documenting and publicizing the value added to service delivery and improved quality of life by award winners' achievements.

### **Return on Investment**

Criteria for assessing the value and effectiveness of the Leon County Productivity Awards program and Florida TaxWatch's assistance include:

- Annual growth in the number of employees, teams and work units nominated for recognition;
- Amount of documented quantitative and qualitative added value contributed by award winners versus awards program costs; and
- Amount of print and broadcast publicity about positive results achieved by Leon County government award winners.

### **Examples of Awards Criteria**

- Achievement is a first in Leon County government, in Florida county government or in the nation.

- Homeland Security achievement that benefits Leon County taxpayers.
- Achievement brings appropriate increased state or federal revenue, which the County is entitled and has not previously received, to benefit Leon County taxpayers.
- Achievement produces significant costs savings or cost avoidances for Leon County taxpayers.
- Achievement required a major policy and/or organizational change, significant consensus building, crisis and/or conflict management relating to a concern of Leon County taxpayers.
- Achievement creates a balance between Leon County economic development, property rights and environmental preservation.
- Achievement has been, or can be, patented or copyrighted.
- Achievement produced \$100,000 or more added value, above and beyond County employee(s) job expectation.
- Achievement produced particularly outstanding customer service or benefit to particular Leon County citizens or the private sector.

## **FIRST-YEAR ESTIMATED FLORIDA TAXWATCH FEES**

### **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT (200 hours @ \$75) \$15,000**

Work with County staff to draft goals and objectives, policies and operating procedures, awards criteria and measurement standards, nomination forms and instructions.

Work with County staff to implement a forms/data management system used in the Davis Productivity Awards program to streamline submission of nominations, staff evaluation, judges' review and decision making, and preparation of material for an awards publication, print and broadcast media material, and awards ceremony script.

Provide orientation on the above for County Administrator's Office, department heads and key administrative staff.

### **NOMINATION PREPARATION/EVALUATION/JUDGING PROCESS (125 hours @ \$75) \$9,375**

Provide training for potential nominators on awards program goals and objectives, policies and operating procedures, criteria, and completion and submission of nomination forms.

Respond to nominators' and Productivity Awards program staff questions, conduct initial evaluation of an estimated 50 first-year nominations, and follow-up with selected nominators for clarification and additional information on achievements.

Assist in establishing Panel of Judges, providing Judges' orientation, preparing material for Judges' review, and hosting and providing staff assistance at Judges Meeting.

**AWARDS MARKETING, CEREMONY AND PROGRAM EVALUATION**  
(100 hours @ \$75) \$7,500

Provide advice and counsel to County for the design and purchase of commemorative plaques, certificates of commendation and other recognition; the design, layout and editing of awards publication; preparation of print and broadcast media material and editorial board meetings; and script for awards ceremony.

Prepare written assessment of first-year successes and areas for improvement, and meet with County staff and officials to discuss improvement recommendations.

Provide independent financial audit conducted in conjunction with annual Florida TaxWatch audit.

**INDIRECT COSTS AND FUNDRAISING (20%) \$5,000**

Florida TaxWatch will serve in an advisory capacity providing recommendations for potential funding sources, fundraising techniques, etc., associated with the fundraising activities for the Leon County Productivity Awards program. Leon County will be responsible for raising and collecting all funds associated with this program.

Total .... \$36,875

**ELIGIBILITY**

- ☆ Any Leon County employee, team or work unit would be eligible to receive an award.
- ☆ Any County employee, supervisor, manager or citizen could submit a nomination.
- ☆ Awards would be made to individuals, teams and work units for innovation, creativity and value achieved during the previous fiscal year, or for sustained effort over a period of two or more years.

## AWARDS CRITERIA

- ★ The productivity achievement would have to be measurable and verified.
- ★ The productivity achievement would have to lead to one or more of the following results:
  - Increased quality, quantity or timeliness of a service or product at the same or lower cost.
  - The same quality, quantity or timeliness of a service or product at a lower cost.
  - An innovation in technology, service delivery or organizational structure that led directly to one of the above.
  - Other measurable cost savings or cost avoidance.
  - Increased public satisfaction with a service or product.
- ★ Evidence that mechanisms are in place to assure that continuous improvement of performance will occur in succeeding years.

## SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION OF NOMINATIONS

A nomination form would be completed for each individual, team and work unit nomination.

All nominations would be independently evaluated by staff of Florida TaxWatch, which has 16 years of experience with more than 9,000 Davis Productivity Awards nominations.

Primary considerations in the TaxWatch evaluation would be the quality and magnitude of the achievement, relative to the nominee's job. This means that employees performing a wide variety of jobs for Leon County would have the same opportunity to win awards.

A distinguished panel of judges appointed by the Leon County Commission would conduct the final review of the nominations and make the award decisions.

## PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Cash awards, commemorative plaques, certificates of commendation and other recognition, would be presented to selected individuals and work units at a ceremony with the County Commission, business and civic leaders. Leon County will be responsible for all costs associated with the awards given and the award ceremony.

## **OPTIMUM PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

Each nomination would be evaluated against the following criteria. It is unlikely that any nomination would meet all of these criteria. Nominators would document that their nominees' performance meets as many of the criteria as possible.

### **Initiative, Innovation and Effort**

- Achievement was initiated independently by the nominee.
- Achievement demonstrates innovation/creativity beyond that expected of the nominee.
- Achievement required the nominee to devote uncompensated time beyond normal working hours.
- Achievement required a substantial amount of teamwork by the nominee.
- Achievement occurred under particularly adverse or unusual circumstances.

### **Customer Satisfaction/Adaptability**

- Achievement resulted in increased external or internal customer satisfaction with a Leon County service or product.
- Achievement has been or can be adapted for use by other counties.

### **Performance and Added Value**

- Substantial improvement in nominee's performance over the previous year.
- Positive comparison of nominee's performance versus the performance of individuals or work units performing similar work.
- Documented improvement of service delivery.
- Substantial net cost savings, cost avoidance or revenue increase resulted from the nominee's achievement in relation to his/her position.
- Sound methodology used to calculate cost savings, cost avoidance or revenue increase.
- Evidence that mechanisms are in place to support continuous improvement of performance in future years.

### **Nominator's and County Administrator's (or Designee's) Assessment**

- Persuasiveness of nominator's cover letter stating why the nominee deserves an award.
- County Administrator or designee compares the nominee's achievement with the standard of performance for his/her position.
- County Administrator designee favorably compares the nominee's achievement with the work of other employees performing similar jobs.

Florida TaxWatch, with its 16-year involvement with the nationally recognized, statewide Davis Productivity Awards program, is uniquely qualified to assist Leon County in developing a "Leon County Productivity Awards" program.